U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY www.cma.army.mil

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CMA PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

as of July 21, 2010:

Anniston Chemical Activity, Ala.: Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ANCDF) has safely processed more than 375,000 gallons of chemical nerve agent and mustard agent and more than 526,000 chemical munitions. Trans-oceanic containers shipped from Sweden were delivered to Anniston last month with the equipment necessary to set up a static detonation chamber (SDC). The SDC will be used later this year for problematic munitions.

Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah: Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF) has safely destroyed 5,020 mustard agent-filled ton containers, 54,453 mustard agent-filled 155 mm projectiles and 63,274 4.2-inch mortars. Overall, TOCDF has processed more than 80 percent of Deseret Chemical Depot's (DCD) mustard agent stockpile and nearly 90 percent of the original agent tonnage. On July 16, DCD firefighters joined forces with other fire agencies within a unified command structure to stop a wildfire which began on the depot. The wildfire burned nearly 150 acres on the northwest section of DCD. The fire quickly spread north and burned an additional 550 acres of land adjacent to the depot. An investigation revealed that a maintenance vehicle's catalytic converter was the heat source that ignited the fire. Depot officials implemented new procedures to limit the potential for similar occurrences in the future. As a precautionary measure, workers briefly halted operations within the storage area. No structures or chemical agent storage igloos were threatened. Operations at the TOCDF were not affected.

Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark.: Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) continued safe mustard disposal operations as well as preventive and corrective maintenance activities. Ms. Teresa Gerton, U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) Executive Deputy to the Commanding General, and Lt. Col. Andrea Dollar, Ms. Gerton's Executive Assistant, AMC, visited PBCDF on July 14 to get an overview of the chemical weapons disposal mission and transition planning. They visited the Transition Office and had a windshield tour of PBCDF.

Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore.: Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) resumed disposal of mustard ton containers on July 13, after an annual maintenance outage of the facility's Metal Parts Furnace. In accordance with its permit, the facility will operate at 50 percent of the permitted Agent Trial Burn rate while state regulators analyze data from the test burns. The permit allows for increased rates once the data has been analyzed and an increase is authorized by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). UMCDF will work closely with DEQ to increase the operations rate as permitted.

75 PERCENT OF DECLARED STOCKPILE DESTROYED

On July 1, 2010, the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) achieved the destruction of 75 percent of its chemical weapons stockpile since Entry-Into-Force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. This international treaty, ratified by the U.S. in 1997, marked an agreement to destroy all chemical weapons located at stockpiles around the Nation. At that time there were seven sites; three of these sites completed their missions and are closed.

"This accomplishment marks another extraordinary team effort between our storage and destruction staffs consisting of both government and contractor personnel," said CMA Director Conrad Whyne. "Our highly-skilled work force deserves a tremendous amount of credit for this achievement."

In reaching the 75 percent destruction mark, CMA has destroyed more than 2.1 million munitions and 22,598 tons of agent. CMA has also reduced the overall public risk from continued storage of the stockpile by 94 percent. CMA's progress is reflected in the fact that neutralization sites at Aberdeen, Md., and Newport, Ind., as well as the incineration site at Johnston Atoll in the Pacific Ocean, have successfully destroyed their chemical warfare materiel and are now closed.

"While not an official treaty-mandated achievement, 75 percent represents the ongoing progress made by the United States, under CMA's leadership, in fulfilling its international obligations to destroy the aging and obsolete chemical weapons stockpile," said Whyne.

CMA anticipates meeting the April 2012 Chemical Weapons Convention deadline by destroying the 90 percent of the stockpile within its purview. CMA remains committed to the safe destruction of stockpiles in Anniston, Ala.; Pine Bluff, Ark.; Tooele, Utah and Umatilla, Ore., which are in their final blister agent campaigns. CMA is also in charge of the safe storage of weapons located near Richmond, Ky., and in Pueblo, Colo.

NSCMP Participates *at the Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board Seminar*

The U.S. Army Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project (NSCMP) participated in the Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board Seminar (DDESB) in Portland, Ore., July 13-15. Held every two years, the seminar offers exhibits, presentations and networking opportunities for explosive safety experts from military and government agencies and industry.

DDESB attendees shared knowledge, best practices and new approaches to explosives safety. NSCMP showcased information on assessment and treatment of recovered chemical warfare materiel on a touch screen that allowed attendees to see videos, photos and "How it works" animation.

Representatives from NSCMP included NSCMP Safety Officer Vivian Graham and Research and Development Group members Warren Taylor and Allan Caplan. Caplan presented a well-received briefing on NSCMP R&D efforts, including the Advanced Fragment Suppression System (AFSS) added to the Explosive Destruction System (EDS), which reduces solid waste from EDS missions by up to 80 percent, significantly cutting costs and supporting NSCMP's commitment to environmental stewardship.

A view inside the EDS vessel of the Advanced Fragment Suppression System.

New Commanders Assume Assignments

Three commanders have assumed leadership through change of command ceremonies this summer:

Blue Grass Chemical Activity – June 14
Lt. Col. Steven G. Basso replaced
Lt. Col. David L. Musgrave

Lt. Col. Basso *holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Texas A&M University. He recently received his masters degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. Prior to assuming Command at Blue Grass, Basso served as the Joint Task Force Paladin J3 for the US Army Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization. Basso was commissioned an officer in the U.S. Army Chemical Corps in 1994.*

Anniston Chemical Activity – July 21
Lt. Col. Willie J. Flucker replaced
Lt. Col. Andrew M. Herbst

Lt. Col. Flucker *previously served as Chief, Plans & Operations, US Army Intelligence & Security Command, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He earned a Bachelor of Science in General Studies from Excelsior College and a Master of Science in Administration from Central Michigan University. Flucker was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Chemical Corps through the Officer Candidate School in 1991.*

Deseret Chemical Depot – July 22
Col. Mark B. Pomeroy replaced
Col. Gerald L. Gladney

Col. Pomeroy *is a Distinguished Military Graduate from the University of Vermont, who was commissioned an officer in the United States Army Chemical Corps in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry. He later received a Master of Science in Operational Analysis & Engineering from the Colorado School of Mines, Golden, Colo., in 1996, and a Master of Science in Natural Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in 2009. Pomeroy's most recent assignment was Branch Chief in the U.S. Army Nuclear and Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction Agency.*

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Environmental Steward Retires After 30 Years of Service

Don Gillis, Environmental Protection Specialist at Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD), is retiring this year after 30 years of federal service. He has spent most of his life protecting the environment, but stumbled into it somewhat accidentally.

Gillis has a bachelor's degree in fire science and worked as a firefighter until breaking his neck in a firehouse accident. After his injury, Gillis began working for the federal government in 1980 as an engineering technician for the Naval Undersea Warfare Engineering Station Keyport Indian Detachment in Port Hadlock, Wash. In 1985, when Gillis was asked to take care of the environmental programs, his boss was still misspelling the word, environment. "People didn't even know how to spell it back then," Gillis said.

Over the years, Gillis has learned all the aspects of environmental protection and has become a natural resources manager.

"Most people are specialists in either wildlife or plant life," said Steve Meyers, Senior Communications Specialist at Science Applications International Corporation-Umatilla. "He's one of the last of the old breeds who does it all."

Over the past 30 years, Gillis does seem to have done it all when it comes to protecting the environment. In addition to working for UMCD, Gillis has also managed natural resources programs for the Navy at Indian Island, Wash., and Adak, Alaska. He has received numerous awards and commendations in recognition of his service to the environment.

Gillis was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation by the Secretary of the Navy. He received the honor after managing the shipments for more than two million pounds of hazardous waste received for processing at Fort Lewis, Wash., when the Navy closed Subic Bay Naval Base. He also received the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award for achievement in Environmental Programs Management for his service at Naval Air Facility in Adak, Alaska.

During his time at UMCD, Gillis has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Mid-Columbia Refuge Complex to protect local wildlife. Each year a species of concern is chosen to receive special attention—in 2008,

Don Gillis, Environmental Protection Specialist at UMCD, has dedicated most of his life to protecting the environment. He has taken a special interest in burrowing owls, a species of concern in Oregon.

the Western Burrowing Owl was chosen because its population was dwindling in the region, due to decline of its shrub-steppe habitat. That year, Gillis began building makeshift burrows that he calls "owl condos" out of 50-gallon juice barrels and buckets.

"The first one we put out, the next day there was an owl there—the next day!" Gillis said.

That year there were four nesting pairs of owls. This year, there are 30 nesting pairs on the depot, and Gillis is working toward a goal to double that number. He has built and installed 68 owl condos in the area, along with several burrows near the Columbia River, which is the first time in seven years that owls have lived in that area.

Gillis has gained international attention for his work in increasing the population of the Western Burrowing Owl, which has allowed him to network with experts to further promote protection of these birds. In March 2009, Gillis held an international conference on the owls and their future at UMCD. He has since placed geolocators on some of the owls to track their migratory patterns.

Gillis is planning to retire sometime in October 2010. In his retirement time, he hopes to spend more time working on his farm, boating and fishing on the Columbia River and spending time with his family.

Safe Lawn Mower Operation

Mowing the lawn seems like a simple chore, but did you know that the revolving blade of a lawn mower can throw objects at speeds of 200 mph, or the length of a football field in one second? Lawn mower safety is important and here are some things to remember when cutting your grass:

- wear heavy shoes, long pants, safety eye shields and ear plugs
- make sure the area is free of trash
- refill gas tanks outdoors, while the lawn mower is turned off, and store gasoline in a safety gas can
- disconnect spark plugs before tipping mower over to service it
- when tipping a lawn mower over, be sure the gas tank refueling port remains high enough above the tank level so that gasoline does not spill out
- look behind when backing up with a lawn mower
- keep the extension cord of an electric lawn mower out of uncut area and do not operate when grass is wet
- do not allow children to ride on or operate a lawn mower
- do not leave a mower unattended while it is running
- use a grass catcher to help prevent objects from being thrown by the mower
- never try to dislodge debris from underneath a mower while it is running.

DCD Taking Stock of Small Mammals

Small Mammal Survey First Step of a Larger Effort

Deseret Chemical Depot (DCD) is taking inventory of much more than ton containers this summer. The DCD environmental team is conducting a small mammal survey to accurately determine what species of small mammals live on the depot.

"This is just the first small step that we have to take before we can get to bigger and better things," says Boyd White, DCD environmental scientist. "We have to know what species our actions can impact."

Troy Johnson, DCD environmental program manager, says similar studies have been conducted throughout the state, and DCD has relied on that information to ascertain what lives on the depot's 19,400 acres. By conducting its own survey, DCD will have a much clearer picture of its inhabitants.

White uses specialized GIS software to help determine where the live traps should be placed. He sets 20 live traps just before the end of his workday and checks them first thing in the morning. The small traps are set with bait—usually peanut butter rolled in oats—and a cotton ball, which gives the animal something to do.

"We have found that little things such as putting a cotton ball in the trap can reduce the mortality rate during the survey," explains Johnson. So far it has worked; all of the trapped animals have lived to see freedom again.

When an animal is trapped, White determines its species, sex and weight. He documents the information along with photographs of each animal. The small mammal survey will continue throughout the summer and will incorporate most of the depot, including the grasslands and wetlands areas.

The data from the survey will be used to help plan future ecological projects. DCD has already undertaken several in an effort to help its flora and fauna flourish such as installing manmade nests for various bird species, replacing old power poles with ones that are designed to prevent large birds from electrocuting themselves, invasive weed control, wetlands restoration and minimizing the advancement of heavy metals that migrate onto depot property from the outwash of an old off-site mine located in the mountains above the depot.

Environmental Scientist Boyd White sets and checks numerous small traps in an effort to determine what small mammals call Deseret Chemical Depot home.

In circle: A trapped white-footed deer mouse is examined and photographed before being released. DCD's small mammal survey will continue throughout the summer; the data collected will help DCD plan future ecological projects.

CMA News is produced by the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency Public Affairs Office.
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